



29th Signal Battalion

Family Newsletter • Issue 3 • April 2004

Message from Iraq



29th Signal Battalion family – The pace has been fast and furious. Now that the dust is settling (okay sand!), I wanted to take an opportunity to provide a quick update and thank you for your support.

The battalion as a whole has performed magnificently. The speed with which we moved into sector and took over the mission are a testament to how skilled our warriors are. They have unequivocally set the standard for maintenance, convoy operations, communications, and safety. I'm sure you are as proud of them as I am.

As I'm sure you know, most of the battalion is located on the largest and most secure logistics support installation in country. The living and working conditions have improved significantly since we first arrived and get better daily. We continue to work to get all of our soldiers out of tents and into buildings or trailers. Believe me when I say our circumstances are much better than originally anticipated. (The installation recently opened an in-door pool and now has a movie theater!)

Although a dangerous area it is by no means as beleaguered as the media may lead you to believe. US

forces are engaged throughout the country in everything from civil and public works projects, to sustainment convoys, to combat patrols. That is a lot of friendly movement and activity! Dissident actions are miniscule in comparison. With that said, the threat remains real. Rest assured the soldiers are trained and ready, and that every precaution is in place to safeguard them.

Our mission remains a critical one.

Lieutenant Colonel Dan Kestle

Without communications, none of the nation building initiatives that our great country strives to accomplish could be done. In time of peril, it is our soldiers who provide the conduit for synchronizing combat operations. In times of tragedy, it is our soldiers who enable timely medical response. From the ordering and delivery of beans, bullets, fuel, and parts, it is our soldiers who make it possible. Throughout the sand storms, heat, cold, rain, and even snow (yes!), they work 24/7, unwavering, and without complaint. They are great soldiers!

And they could not do it without your support! Knowing that you are safe and secure, and taking care of each other, allows us to focus on the mission at hand. Strong Family Readiness Groups are key to our success. By taking care of each other you are taking care of us. You do have a direct impact on our force protection and safety! Thank you for the support you give to not only your loved one, but to the entire battalion, and most importantly to each other.

God bless.

LTC Kestle



Calendar Items

April 10 Easter Egg Hunt

This Saturday, 11:00 – 1:00 PM

Happy hunting for children 0-12

Backyard, Nelson Rec Center

Bring a snack, like chips or finger foods, to share

(just off Pendelton Drive on 2nd Division Road)

Come enjoy this Saturday afternoon with us

April 24 Battalion FRG Meeting

Saturday, 10:00 – 1:00 PM

Group Classes, Speakers, Slide Show, Friends, Food

Main Post Chapel Fellowship Hall

Potluck, 12-1 PM – bring your favorite dish

(Park in the back of the Main post Chapel.

Look at the extension of the building

on the left, go up the metal stairwell

on the outside of the building to the 2nd floor.)

Limited Childcare provided from 9:45 - 12:15

First Come, First Served

Notify FRG Leader of # Children, age ASAP

This will be a great time to get together for support

Greetings from the Great Middle East!! ☺

I tried getting quotes from people, once again; we are spread out everywhere, so it is kind of hard to do. You can all be proud to know that 29th is providing Clear and Open Communications all over this post and beyond. Communications have gotten so much better since we set up; our customers are very pleased with what your soldiers are doing over here...so you can all be proud!

The role that you play has to be understood! I am going to be doing several things for all of you over the next month! One of those things is getting pictures of your loved ones picking up the boxes you send! If only you could see their face when they have a package from you!!! WOW!!

If you want to know what are big hits, I will tell you: DVD movies, especially new releases and oldie but goodies; CD's of all types, once again new releases are nice; games, things that keep them occupied and having fun; sports equipment (volleyball, etc); kool aid, cookies, candy. Also, packages seem to take anywhere from 10 to 30 days. When

you ship things, tuck the customs form inside out so that people can NOT read what is in the package! This will prevent some vandalism.

Things are slowly, but surely, getting better. Getting into routines, both daily and weekly, make time go by. Most are getting some well-deserved time off. This community just opened a 50,000 dollar indoor movie theatre; they have an outdoor theatre that you take a chair to and sit outside. They have a huge indoor swimming pool, and a huge PX. So, things are getting better and better...just in time for the heat.

The bugs are slowly, but surely, coming out as the temperature climbs into the 90's. We do have air conditioners, refrigerators, and fans. Once again, the Command Team has spent a lot of money to ensure your soldiers are taken care of during these hot months coming up, Hooah?

Most are busy planning their leaves. So hopefully you're loved ones will be coming home to you very soon for a well-deserved two-week break!!!


CPT Brockbank wants us to do a VTC (video teleconference) in the near future, so I am working on that.

Let's pray that within the next month we can begin scheduling them, and you can actually talk and see your loved ones!! I know the companies are all working on some dynamic picture shows to send back for your company FRG meetings also.

The Iraqi School project is coming along great. If you want to be a part of this project, please get your items to CPT Brockbank by the second week of April so that they will be here by the 25th. We are asking for school supplies, coloring materials, sandals, and toys, so that we can take them to the Iraqi Elementary School the Battalion has adopted. Send things to:

SFC Tommy Carson
Attn: SCHOOL PROJECT
HHC, 29th Signal BN
APO AE 09391

Not much more to tell you, but hope to have VTC ready to go this month. We are doing all we can to make that a reality. Keep the packages coming, and we will work on quotes, newsletters, pictures, and VTC. Deal? ☺

Until next month...take care and
THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT
AND LOVE! 

The Power of Thought


Kate Kestle

True story: A woman is involved in a severe car accident at a major highway intersection and is being treated by paramedics on the spot. As this is happening, she reports leaving her physical body and floating above the scene of the accident. In this state she is bombarded with angry thoughts of motorists stuck in a long back up of cars waiting for the accident to be clear. Overwhelmed by the anger directed at her she sees a light coming from one of the cars further back. The light extends into the sky. As she drifts over to the car she hears the prayers of the woman behind the wheel praying for whoever was in that accident. The woman floating took note of her license plate number. Months later, when she was finally released from the hospital, she tracked down the owner of the car and went to her house with a bouquet of flowers to thank her for her prayers on the day of the accident.¹ Wow.

Even with the regular emails from our loved ones in Iraq it can be reassuring to know that in the moment we think of them they receive the thoughts and a connection is made.

Dr. Emoto, a Japanese scientist has been treating thousands of patients over the last 10 years with water. He exposes the water to various words like "love" or "thank you". Then, by photographing the frozen water crystal before and after the word, he shows how the water responds by forming a beautiful crystal. When unkind words are used the water responds by taking the form of polluted water. Even the difference between "do it", and the gentler "let's do it", showed a remarkable difference with the first taking the form of polluted water and the latter forming a beautiful crystal.² Again, Wow!

Consider that our bodies are over 70% water. Imagine what critical thoughts we say to ourselves, or our children, or neighbors. Consider the physical effect on our bodies or theirs. Now consider what may happen to us when we change our thoughts in the moment and say something nurturing to ourselves, like, "give it time, you are doing the best you can." Or compassionate thought to our children like, "oh, are you having a bad day?" Imagine the ripple effect of kind thoughts and words.

So simple, so little effort, such big payoffs. 

¹ Carolyn Myss, "Energy Anatomy"

² Dr. Masaru Emoto, "Messages From Water"